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From: Ryerson.Teddy
Sent: Sat 2/1/2014 1:18:40 AM
Subject: Suggestions for weekly note

1. Want to acknowledge very positive reactions to Gina's regular communications to the workforce, including SOTU town-hall. Good energy, positive delivery, useful updates and much-appreciated strong support for our hard work.

2. Drought: Big news this week highlights severe consequences stemming from California's drought. There were two critical developments in the Drought Response today.

a. State officials at DWR announced that the water allocation to all 29 of its State Water Project water contractors would be zero (-0-). This is unprecedented. These contractors serve 25 million people and nearly 1 million acres of farmland. The only exception would be for deliveries to a few "settlement" contractors (who have what amounts to a "superpriority"), and some wildlife refuges. Even these last contractors may be cut 50% soon if conditions do not improve. The State Water Project contractors include the Metropolitan Water District of Southern California and the Kern County Water Agency. Federal CVP contractors (such as Westlands and Sacramento River contractors) may face a similar situation, but the first official CVP allocation will not occur, per contract, until mid-February. The announcement marks the first time in the 54-year history of the State Water Project that such an action has been taken.

b. DWR and USBR petitioned the State Water Resources Control Board (SWRCB) for a Temporary Urgency Change Petition temporarily revising their water right permits (diversion permits). The Petition is not generally available yet, but my understanding is that the request is to relax the Delta outflow standard (the X2 standard) and to keep the Delta Cross Channel open. The existing outflow standard calls for, in a critically dry year, roughly 7100 cfs of outflow at the compliance point (Collinsville) from February through June. The petition asks to relax that to 1500 cfs for February, with a proposed process for deciding again what to do in March, depending on hydrological conditions. Meeting the 7100 cfs standard would in effect drain the already depleted reservoirs, and would eliminate any cold water storage for salmon migration standards later in the year. The purpose of the Delta Cross Channel action is to freshen water in the interior Delta, which would otherwise become stagnant and saline in these low water conditions. The SWRCB will act on this petition on an expedited basis, pursuant to the Governor's drought proclamation. EPA does not have a role in these water rights permit temporary urgency change petitions.

c. More information on both of these actions is available at:
http://www.water.ca.gov/news/newsreleases/2014/013114prerss_conference.pdf This packet also has some very useful graphs and charts that explain the drought conditions. It is truly unprecedented.

3. Tribal meetings: We welcomed approximately 100 tribal representatives to the RTOC this week, and additionally welcomed USFWS to our meeting, where they spoke on eagle take at wind generation facilities. I also met separately with Tribal Leaders at a roundtable session. Leaders raised issues including drought and the engagement between the EPA, other feds and the states on water extraction and other impacts of drought. Leaders also expressed concern about resource extraction (water transfer, mining) projects impacting tribal lands. Heads up: Tribal Leaders continue to express frustration about opportunities to be involved early on in development of EPA's new guidances and measures (rather than being consulted after EPA issues the draft or proposal). They may seek to engage with you on these concerns.

4. NEPA High Priority Projects: Together with OECA and OW, we continue to work closely with CEQ, and other federal agencies on two high profile projects: the proposed Rosemont Copper mine project near Tucson, and the EIR/EIS for the BDCP/Bay Delta in California.
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